candidates appearing for interviews after all India competitive examinations, the question of giving rail travel concession is under consideration.

Setting up of Export Council in Cooperative sector

1105. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is under Government's consideration to set up an Export Council within the Co-operative sector;

(b) whether the proposal is expected to be implemented during the year 1991-92;

(c) if so, the steps taken so far in the matter; and

(d) what other steps are being taken by Government to enable the Co-operative Sector to participate effectively in the Export trade?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI JAYANTILAL VIRCHANDBHAI SHAH): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) In view (a & b) above, Question does not arise.

(d) In addition to export incentives such as Cash Compensatory Support, Duty Draw Back System. Advance Import Licence, Duty Exemption Scheme being extended among others to the cooperatives, National Agricultural, Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) has been appointed as a canalising agency for export of onion and alongwith Tribal Cooperative Federation (TRIFED) for export of Nigerseed.

Risk and Hazard Scheme

1106. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a memorandum dated the 17th December, 1990, from Indian Railway Traction Workers Association.

(b) whether in the explanatory note attached to the above memorandum the Association has discussed the issue of covering traction staff under 'risk and hazard scheme';

(c) if so, what are the salient features of their argument in favour of covering the traction staff under 'Risk and Hazard Scheme'; and

(d) whether Government are reviewing their demand in the light of the facts that traction workers do work under grave risks?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) No, Sir. However, a memorandum dated 20-8-89 was received from the Association.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The salient feature of the demand is that Traction staff have to work under high voltage traction lines and because of the electromagnetic effect, their health deteriorates in the long run.

(d) The Government have considered their demand. Traction staff do not work under High Voltage conditions. Before starting any work on the Traction equipment, power supply is switched off and the equipment is properly earthed. Hence there is no particular hazard involved in this working. The staff therefore do not fulfil the criteria/guidelines laid down by the Department of Personnel and Training for grant of Risk Allowance.

Manufacture of Portions at Alambagh, Lucknow

1107. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Northern Railway Plant for manufacture of portions situated at Alambagh (Lucknow) is still operating:

(b) if so, its share in the volume of sale to the Indian Railways of Thermit Portions produced annually in comparison

to other suppliers and especially the India Thermit Corporation Ltd., at Kanpur, Gwalior and other places;

(c) the number of portions bought by the Indian Railways respectively since 1984 from its own plant, the India Thermit Corporation Ltd. and other producers;

(d) the price paid yearwise to the respective suppliers;

(e) whether Government are taking steps to increase the output at the Alambagh Plant; and

(f) whether the registration for a new Plant to manufacture 'Portions' is permissible to meet increasing demand of Railways?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Please see details against Item (c) below.

(c) Approximate number of Portions supplied by Thermit Portion Plant (TPP), Northern Railway, Alambagh, India Thermit Corpn., (ITC) and others are as under:

Year	T.P.P.	I.T.C.	Others
1984-85	69776	234974	..
1985-86	113478	247760	4750
1986-87	110153	254500	1750
1987-88	73661	205200	10750
1988-89	87868	237500	33250
1989-90	72132	302000	31000
1990-91 (Upto Feb. '91)	69993	231000	37750

(d) The price of 'Portions' varies with rail section, rail metallurgy and the type of process. Detailed information is under collection from zonal Railways for different years and will be laid on the table of the House.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) The present capacity is adequate to meet the full demand of Portions which is proposed to be tapered off from next year onwards by stepping up Flash Butt Welding.

Reinstatement of workers of the Food Corporation of India, Nalgonda

1108. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Board of Directors of the Food Corporation of India had approved the re-employment of 82 retrenched workmen of the Food Corporation of India, Nalgonda and necessary instructions were issued to the concerned officers in this regard in October, 1990;

(b) if so, whether these instructions have been implemented;

(c) if not, the reasons for the delay; and

(d) by when these workers would be re-employed as per the decision of the Food Corporation of India?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAO BIRENDRA SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) FCI is making efforts to implement the decision taken by the Board of Directors after completing necessary administrative formalities.